

Virginia Advisory Committee  
For the Education of the Gifted  
University of Richmond: Richmond Virginia  
Keller Reception Hall  
Friday, April 27, 2001

VACEG Chair T. Douglas called the meeting to order at 10:15 a.m.

VACEG members present included:

VACEG Chair T. Douglas	VACEG Past Chair L. Rae	G. Hubbard		
A. Bowman	J. Towslee	S. Wadsworth	T. Wiseman	L. James
N. Ballinger	J. Jones	C. Cottrell	K. Eicher	R. Turner
E. Snyder	S. Winett	J. Leslie	J. Crowther	C. Rice
N. Brittle	N. Walsh	B. McGonagill	J. Marler	

Minutes were read and approved, with corrections noted.

Chair Douglas introduced our guest speaker, Dr. J. VanTassel-Baska of The College of William and Mary. Dr. VanTassel-Baska spoke about Standards and Gifted Education.

Dr. VanTassel-Baska's provided handouts and information regarding the use of the Standards of Learning (SOL) as the foundation of gifted education curriculum. High level content is essential to gifted programs.

Dr. VanTassel-Baska discussed the reason for standards:

- 1) Assurance of quality...especially for world-class learning.
- 2) Provides goals and structure for gifted education. We must work for appropriate ways to translate gifted educational concepts into regular classroom settings.
- 3) Promoting change. Set standards at high level. Meet or exceed them for growth. Standards are essential for gifted students. Gifted students should be learning approximately 50% more than they are learning in present classroom settings. Structures of standards push the educational level higher.

Dr. VanTassel-Baska discussed the purpose for standards:

- 1) In the world today, a deep understanding of problem solving is needed to be a functional member of society due to new needs of society.
- 2) Issue of equity. We must not reserve problem-solving skills for gifted only. All students should have access to appropriate education.
- 3) All students should have access to challenging curriculum. If students are given more challenging learning at an earlier age, students will rise to the challenge. (Compare students from barrio settings working successfully on AP exams.).

Dr. VanTassel-Baska discussed the adaptations for standards: Standards have taken a back seat to assessments. So there is more negativity around standards than necessary. Assessments are driving what is happening in the classroom teaching rather than the standards. She suggested that the state would be better off trying adaptation techniques and creating task assessment rubrics that cluster stand by major strands through the use of archetypes.

Dr. VanTassel-Baska discussed the criticism for standards:

- 1) SOL have taken away all the creativity in learning and recommended that they can suggest opportunities for creativity
- 2) There was lack of trial of standards with real students before the standards were implemented and revised
- 3) Nature of interpretation of standards varies widely.
- 4) Concern that the standards are not worthy standards for gifted students.
- 5) Lack of sensitivity to the standards' archetypal assessments. Archetype assessments should be used in a formative way:
  - (a) to diagnose and see where students need more instruction

- (b) to accelerate and deepen SOL implementation across levels but within strands
  - (c) to use research strand topics to design instruction for multiple grade levels
  - (d) to increase continuity by compressing the standard and by showing that students have met the standard.
- 6) Integrated learning across separate content area SOL is not implemented. Standards are not separate entities. Educators must see more than their own grade levels, and they must see more than one subject area at a time, in order to connect the standards to their teaching.

Dr. VanTassel-Baska recommended that the gifted community accept the standards and work through them with the power of gifted education emphasizing positive change and moving gifted programs to higher levels with enhanced learning opportunities for students.

What is positive change?

Enhanced learning opportunities for students.

Creating a climate of excellence for learning.

Learning-centered students, parents, and teachers.

What is evidence for students? What is documented to show accomplishment?

We must establish a climate of excellence, not diffuse our efforts. Learning-centered students, teachers, and parents see this as a basis for making decisions about positive changes in education.

Dr. VanTassel-Baska answered a variety of questions from the audience. Chair Douglas thanked Dr. VanTassel-Baska for her comments and for sharing so many perspectives on gifted education with VACEG.

Chair Douglas reconvened the VACEG session and asked for summaries of information from the three subcommittees. Introductory pages would highlight VACEG work over the past two years and include three subcommittee reports. J. Burris suggested that Best Practices Committee be changed to gifted Education Standards Committee. Other subcommittee chairs reported to the general membership. The chair explained that all information from the subcommittees would be compiled for the final report to be presented in July to the Board of Education.

After lunch, Chair Douglas recognized retiring members of VACEG. Certificates of appreciation for their service were presented to them.

J. Jones	C. Rice	L. James	T. Wiseman	K. Brunik		
J. Burris	D. Rice	L. Solod	S. Fodrell	S. Keith	L. Rae	

Chair Douglas recalled the long service to gifted education of L. Rae. A framed certificate, a floral bouquet, and a gift of appreciation were presented to L. Rae to celebrate her work which started in a small, rural school division where she was told gifted education would not work. L. Rae expressed her appreciation and stated the need to keep working with leaders at the state level in order to affect positive changes for gifted education in Virginia.

The Chair summarized the major accomplishments of the two-year study. Some members have agreed to have their term of VACEG service extended. D. Shannon has been reappointed. New members will be appointed by the Virginia Board of Education in July.

G. Hubbard presented Chair Douglas a floral bouquet and an antique print of Richmond from the James River in appreciation of her work as chair. Chair Douglas then spoke about the stress of leading VACEG, working through executive board meetings and other agenda items, in addition to goal-setting efforts for VACEG. Revision of the VACEG bylaws and other important changes were made to engender support of gifted education, with the help of G. Hubbard and others. Working on VACEG, and especially serving as VACEG Chair, has helped Chair Douglas appreciate gifted students and teachers more deeply.

VACEG committees met to discuss recommendations to be included in the VACEG report to the State Board of Education.

Chair Douglas called the committees back to order for sharing their discussions and final recommendations for the report.

#### SOL/SOA/SOO Committee

1. Commitment to recertification training of content area teachers so students gain staff development training for content teachers K-12
2. Availability of T/TACs to include resources for gifted education gifted is part of teacher accreditation

#### Gifted Standards Committee (formerly Best Practices Committee)

J. Burris suggested changing the title of the committee from Best Practices to Gifted Standards.

#### Governor's Schools Committee

Some suggested changes include:

1. Information from 13 Feb meeting revisited to see how categories may be systemically applied
2. Framework of community... insert a foundation (theoretical underpinning) with explanation of aims and expectations of Governors' Schools
3. Evaluation timelines
4. Map with index
5. List school divisions that cannot access Academic-Year Governors' Schools due to location
6. Include the changes to the Summer Residential Program and also include VPA information.

Chair Douglas thanked the committees for their work and for their help in sharing information for the VACEG state report. Members were invited to attend the Virginia Board of Education meeting which is scheduled for the last Thursday in June (June 28). Usually, the meeting is held in General Assembly Senate Conference Room B, 9th Street and Broad, beginning at 9:00am.

#### Recommendations for the VACEG 2001-2003 study:

Chair Douglas opened the floor for suggestions and ideas as to what to study.

G. Hubbard suggested that one issue has come to the front with each invited speaker to VACEG over the past two years: the role of gifted education and general education, within the framework of standards in Virginia.

Many gifted coordinators feel the opening pages of the Virginia Plan for Gifted could use examination and amplification. It was suggested that the committee rewrite the overview of the Virginia Plan for the Gifted to include the fit of gifted education with general education and with the Virginia SOL.

#### Dates tentatively set for VACEG meetings in 2001-2002:

September 21, 2001    December 7, 2001    February 15, 2002    April 19, 2002

VACEG was first called into being in April 1982. April 2002 will mark the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of VACEG as a state advisory committee. It may be appropriately commemorative to bring forward all previous VACEG chairs for the 19 April, 2002, meeting, so they may be honored and hear the VACEG interim report.

Reports from professional organizations:

J. Jones: Fall conference for School Psychologists Association/Virginia Psychiatry Association will be held in Richmond in October, 2001. National Association of School Psychologists has produced handouts on multiculturalism: Risk to Resiliency

Web sites, books, and other resources deal with the question: "What brings people from risk to resiliency?" Compare the influence of teachers on the question.

N. Ballinger: Virginia Association for the Gifted will host its biannual conference on November 1-3, 2001, in Williamsburg, Virginia. Presenters include Sylvia Rimm, Jann Leppien, and Rick Olenchak.

T. Wiseman: National Middle School Conference will be held in Washington, DC, on November 1-3, 2001. This is the closest the national conference has been for Virginia teachers in long time. Joseph Renzulli will speak. School tours of site-based gifted programs in the Washington, DC, area are planned.

#### Virginia Department of Education Report

- Note the DOE gifted Web page. Much information is posted and updated including the local plan template form and the Virginia Plan for the Gifted.
  - Information about out-of-level testing is posted.
  - News announcements for gifted education are posted.
  - Collections of conferences are there for organizations all across America.
  - Student accelerated learning opportunities for summer 2001, are posted.
  - Scholarship information is posted.
  - Grant information is available.
  - Local gifted education coordinators' link is available. People are calling with the latest information, so it is accurate.
- One-day voluntary training for new gifted coordinators is set for September. Invitations were sent to high school guidance counselors who help with recommendations for gifted placement of students in schools.
- Local plans for gifted will run pilot programs in Regions 4 and 8. Of the 72 plans submitted, 58 have now been approved. As a part of the process, EEOC sent representatives to see if school divisions were working to help gifted education: were divisions doing things which could count for gifted education? Note the percentages on the report which provide greater access. Virginia is aware of what is required to find unidentified gifted students.
- Governor's Schools have 48 students who have accepted mentorships.
- The new Governor's School for Agriculture will start in July, 2001, with 51 students.
- The Massanutten Governor's School for Environmental Studies has been approved by Virginia's Board of Education, but it has not been funded.
- All of the student openings for Virginia's Governor's School programs are filled.
- A planning grant for Danville will change much for the Governor's School there, and the result could include closing the Danville site.
- A Korean teacher exchange program, with target dates for visits by Korean teachers in March, 2002, has been planned for Lynchburg College.
- Summer Governor's Schools are fully staffed and ready to receive students.

Chair Douglas reported April 1, 1982, minutes of VACEG based on researched information regarding early work of VACEG. State Superintendent S. John Davis made the following charge, on behalf of Virginia's Board Of Education, to VACEG.

Virginia Board of Education's Charge to the Advisory Committee for the Education of the Gifted:

The Virginia Advisory Committee for the Education of the Gifted has been established:

- To develop a definition for a "legitimate and acceptable" gifted program
- To develop a list of appropriate uses of state funds
- To continually update the state plan for the gifted
- To clarify the Standards of Quality as it relates to post-secondary education
- To determine the benefits of gifted programs to students
- To consider the need for state-wide residential programs
- To take the lead in teacher training and certification
- To establish bylaws
- To advise the state department staff on the effectiveness of its resources to meet the goals the committee establishes
- To expand the state staff
- To reconsider formation of a school-college program
- To recommend accreditation standards for schools
- To expand Advanced Placement services, and
- To expand financial support at the state and local levels for programs.

Conferred on the committee on the first day of April, 1982.

S. John Davis, Superintendent of Public Instruction

Chair Douglas passed the VACEG gavel to incoming VACEG Chair Hubbard, recognizing VACEG Vice-Chair Eicher, and noting that VACEG Secretary Marler will continue as secretary. Chair Douglas extended thanks to each VACEG member for forming such a focused, hard-working, congenial committee in support of gifted.

B. McGonagill reported having met recently with Dr. R. Turner. Dr. Turner expressed gratitude at having lived long enough to have seen gifted students in Virginia get the same accolades as athletes.

There was no public comment. Chair Douglas adjourned VACEG meeting at 2:58 p.m.

The Virginia Advisory Committee  
for the Education of the Gifted  
Executive Committee  
Keller Reception Hall  
University of Richmond  
April 27, 2001

VACEG Executive Committee members present included:

N. Ballinger   T. Douglas   G. Hubbard   J. Jones   B. McGonagill   J. Marler

The meeting was called to order at 3:05 p.m. by the chair, T. Douglas. Several items relating to VACEG membership and service were discussed. Plans for the 2001-2002 academic year were discussed. The meeting was adjourned at 3:35 p.m.